

Website Comment **181423**

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From: DominiqueBachelet
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Address: 2505 Vista Ave SE
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Comment: August 13, 2004

Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Office
Att'n: Northeast NPR-A Planning Team
222 West Seventh Avenue
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599

Dear Planning Team,

1 Please accept these comments on the proposed amendment to the oil and gas leasing plan for the Northeast National Petroleum Reserve Environmental Impact Statement. I am especially concerned about the impact the Bureau of Land Management's proposal would have on the area around Teshekpuk Lake, one of the most unique and important wetlands in the entire Arctic.

2 I urge you to adopt Alternative A, the "No Action" alternative, because it would maintain protection for the entire Teshekpuk Lake Surface Protection Area. This extraordinary ecosystem provides critical habitat for molting geese and nesting habitat for Steller's eiders, northern pintails, yellow-billed loons and other species. It also supports a vitally important caribou herd that Alaska natives depend on for their subsistence.

3 Eighty-seven percent of the northeastern reserve is already open to oil and gas companies for leasing. In the five years since the original 1998 northeast plan, additional information and analyses have been accumulated that point toward significant impacts on fish and wildlife if more of this sensitive area is opened. It would be a huge mistake to risk the internationally significant ecological resources of Teshekpuk Lake for a short-term supply of energy, especially when we know that the United States cannot drill its way to energy independence.

004
Global
Warming My research on climate change impacts on arctic environments shows that high latitude ecosystems are particularly at risk from a warming climate. Although Alaska's temperatures have been above normal for nearly two decades, climate models indicate the average annual temperature for the state may increase by 13 degrees Fahrenheit in the worst-case scenario by the end of the 21st century. Several research papers published this year describe the various impacts that may reduce the extent of the tundra by 90% by 2100. Since 1970 over 15% have already been lost. I urge you not to jeopardize the existence and subsistence of this fragile ecosystem by an unnecessary human disturbance.

5 I urge you to choose Alternative A, the "No Action" alternative, to protect the reserve's irreplaceable wildlife, wilderness and subsistence values for future generations.

Sincerely,

Dominique Bachelet
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181423 (Cont'd)

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Attached: None